

AFTER GRADUATION AT ANNAPOLIS AND WEST POINT.

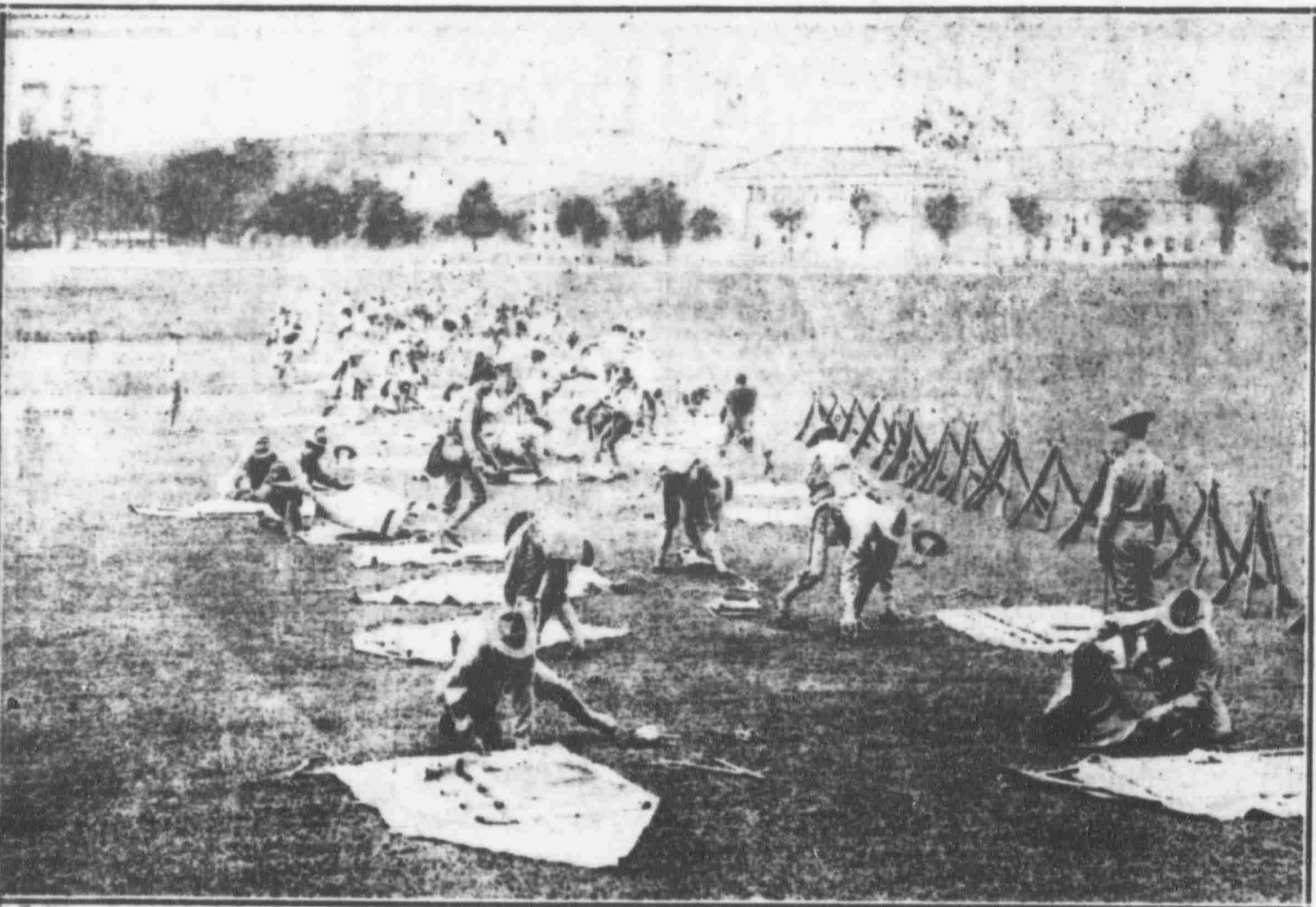


Photo by Paul Thompson, N. Y.

CADETS AT WEST POINT PITCHING ARMY TENTS OF THE NEW TYPE.

EXTRA ACE THE CAUSE OF TROUBLE

Only Captain Foss's Entrance Prevented a Killing on a River Boat.

There was a game of poker on the old Belle of the Bayou one night, said Caleb M. Foss, the veteran bartender on the Mississippi River packet City of Natchez, "that come nigh bustin' up in a nasty fight. I reckon there wouldn't a' been no way of keepin' one man, an' mo' in likely two, f'r bein' killed if Cap'n Foss hadn't come in just when he did.

"The game itself wa'n't nothin' wonderful. I've saw them 't was a heap bigger many a time, an' them 't was playin' didn't near to be liable to be hurt much. The way it was runnin' it didn't look like anybody stood to lose mo' 'n two or three hundred even if he was to have every bad luck, an' they all 'peared to have money enough to stand that 'bouten bettin'.

"But three on 'em that was playin' didn't bear to be settin' in f'r money. What they was lookin' for was the fun an' excitement. If they win all right, an' if they lose they wa'n't liable to squeal. 'Course it was off with the other two. Them bein' gamblers by profession, o' co'se they was playin' as a matter of business; an' yo' c'n take it f'r me 't when Hank Rivers an' Bill Fanshawe was settin' in together in a game of draw they was most gen'ly liable to get away with most o' the money there was on the table.

"There was another man into the game, though, by the name o' Roy Hatfield, what was full as good a player as either o' them. He wa'n't no p'fessional at that, but he was a all round spot f'r New Orleans what had been a spot all his life an' knowed all the tricks there was; but he were a gentleman too an' there wa'n't never no s'picion o' crooked play f'r 's he was concerned, an' it looked like it wouldn't be healthy f'r anybody else to play crooked when he was into the game.

"The other men I didn't know, on'y they called themselves Littlefield an' Dunbar. They was good players too, but o' co'se I didn't know whether they was liable to catch on case of any tricks bein' tried or not. On'y I wa'n't likely there'd be any while Hatfield was settin' in.

"First of there wa'n't no sign o' trouble. They 'peared to be playin' a friendly enough game, 'bouten anybody tryin' to draw it o' co'se the p'fessionals was playin' a tight game, but none o' the gentlemen was losin' much. I reckon Fanshawe an' Rivers must a' knowed Hatfield's play, f'r I watched 'em quite a spell case in the game an' I couldn't see as they made any breaks. I was lookin' to see 'em do it too, bein' as I knowed what Hatfield'd be liable to do, an' I seen right away what the play was a heap sight harder 'n what it was first o' Littlefield had lost considerable, an' I seen 't he was bein' beat on 'em, but he couldn't prove nothin' 't he was right, an' all 's he done was to 'tall 'bout the pot.

"On the draw, Hatfield pulled to the green 't he 's an' took three, harn' opened on kings. Littlefield took one an' Rivers, not havin' no reason to disguise his hand, called for two.

"O' co'se Hatfield throwed in a white chip af'r he lifted his cards, but what he wa'n't lookin' fer was to have Littlefield

do the same thing, puttin' the play square up to Rivers.

"Well, o' co'se he couldn't do but one thing, 'bouten he was to weaken 'count of a one card draw af'r anybody knowed whether it was any good or not, so he rose it \$50. Bein' as there was \$70 in the pot a ready besides them two white chips it looked like a good play.

"Anyways it was enough fer to make Hatfield drop, him not havin' bettered in the draw, but Littlefield he picked up his hand an' studied it f'r a while like he was tryin' to make up his mind whether to bluff or not.

"Then he fingered his chips a little slow an' counted out the \$50 an' put it in a little heap in front of him like he hadn't made up his mind whether to call or not, an' all the time I c'd see what he was watchin' Rivers open the tail of his eye.

"Then all of a sudden he pulled out a wad f'r a inside pocket an' countin' out five \$100 bills he put 'em with the chips an' showed the hull business into the pot.

"Just natchly Rivers couldn't think nothin' else on'y 't he must be bluffin'. If he d' on'y rose it \$100 or so it d' a' looked like he wa'n't a call, but a boost o' \$50 when there was on'y \$130 in the pot looked on reasonable an' Rivers done what 'most any good player d' a' did. He says, 'I c'n't raise a one card draw very well, but I'll call that bet,' an' he put up the money.

"Then Littlefield showed down a straight, an' bein' as Rivers hadn't bettered his three aces the pot was Littlefield's.

"I reckon that was the biggest single bet they'd had so far, but nobody said nothin'.

"It was Fanshawe's deal, an' when he passed the deck over to Hatfield to cut, Hatfield gave 'em a rille first off an' then cut 'em an' passed 'em back. He didn't say nothin'. There hadn't been much talk while they was playin', but some how it come to me how he must a' thought Fanshawe was stackin' the cards. O' co'se Fanshawe c'd a' rilled 'em again, bein' as the dealer has the right to the last shuffle, but he didn't. He just dealt.

"There couldn't be no s'picion of a stacked deck af'r that, but some way it happened 't the dealer got the best of it af'r all. Littlefield had anted, an' he rose it all come in up to Fanshawe, an' he rose it. Littlefield dropped, but Rivers stayed.

"Dunbar rose a again, but let Hatfield out, an' Fanshawe made out he was goin' to raise again, but he only raised, an' Rivers closed the pot. Then there was nigh \$40 in the pot.

"It come called, f'r one card an' Dunbar took two, an' that was what Fanshawe wanted. Then Rivers put in his white chip an' Dunbar be \$50, so Fanshawe looked at his hand mighty close af'r he played. What he seen must a' satisfied him, f'r he rose it \$100. Then the others both dropped an' he took the pot 'bouten a showdown. Looked to me like Dunbar had oughter called if he had three, but o' co'se they wa'n't no callin'. Fanshawe mought a' bettered, an' it was a stiff bet. Anyways I seen 't Dunbar was bet up, an' I says to myself what there was goin' to be trouble.

"It come on the very next deal. They'd been playin' dollar ante, but when Littlefield took the deck to deal Rivers put up \$2. 'Talls five,' he said, 'nobody made no objection.

"It come called, f'r one card an' Dunbar took two, an' that was what Fanshawe wanted. Then Rivers put in his white chip an' Dunbar be \$50, so Fanshawe looked at his hand mighty close af'r he played. What he seen must a' satisfied him, f'r he rose it \$100. Then the others both dropped an' he took the pot 'bouten a showdown. Looked to me like Dunbar had oughter called if he had three, but o' co'se they wa'n't no callin'. Fanshawe mought a' bettered, an' it was a stiff bet. Anyways I seen 't Dunbar was bet up, an' I says to myself what there was goin' to be trouble.

Littlefield kind o' laughs an' says 'I reckon I'm in between the devil an' the deep blue sea.' So he drops an' leaves the two on 'em to fight it out.

"Well, 'peared like they was both loaded f'r 'lar, f'r they rose each other a couple of times mo', an' then Dunbar he says, 'I reckon that 's hard enough af'r the draw,' an' he makes good 'bouten raisin'.

"Then it come to the draw they both stood pat, an' Dunbar havin' first say put up \$100. Then Rivers he rose it \$500 an' Dunbar he studies a long time, but finally he calls. 'You may have fo's,' he says, 'but if you hadn't I've got you beat.' An' he shows down a king full on aces.

"Rivers lays his hand down race up at the same time an' shows how he has a ace full.

"Well, they all stared a minute considerable, an' then Hatfield speaks up. 'It's a foul deck, gentlemen. You'll have to draw yo' money down.'

"But Dunbar says very quiet an' natchly, 'Tain't no foul deck,' he says. 'That man had the ace o' diamonds up his sleeve outen the last blue deck we had.' An' o' co'se he pulled his gun while he was speakin'.

"Well, they had called for a new deck a good many times while they was playin', an' o' co'se it mought a' been 't Rivers had did just what Dunbar said, on'y it didn't look like there was any way o' provin' it.

"But there wa'n't no killin'. Rivers had his gun out as quick as Dunbar an' it looked to me like there wa'n't nothin' to keep one or both on 'em f'r bein' killed, but just as I was dodgin' Cap'n Foss stepped up. 'Peared like he was alays on the minute.

"He reached out an' he grabbed both o' them guns an' twisted 'em up just as the two on 'em fired, so both shots went wild.

"Then he says, very stern, 'What's this all about?' o' co'se they hat to tell him. There wa'n't no reason, on'y f'r him bein' cap'n o' the boat, why he sh'd settle it, but bein' cap'n his word was law, an' he wa'n't to ways slow about speakin' of it.

"You'd draw down yo' own money,' he said, an' mo' 'n that, this game stop right here. If yo' can't play yo' cards 'bouten a gun play yo' can't play on this boat. An' mo' 'n that, he c'd on, speakin' to Rivers an' Fanshawe, 'you two won't never play on this boat again. I've had my eyes on yo' f'r some time an' I don't like yo' game.'

"Well, that was all there was to it. Rivers an' Fanshawe got off at the next landin' an' I never seen 'em on the Belle of the Bayou again. I dunno whether Dunbar ever got square with 'em or not, but I know he was mighty sore on 'em, old man f'r buttin' in when he did. It d' a' been a good thing, though, if there'd been mo' cap'n like Foss on the river then days. Likely there'd a' been less killin' did."

A Sixteenth Century Korean Book. From the Seoul Press.

Of several chronicles on the Korean side of the Japanese invasion of Korea at the end of the sixteenth century a book entitled "Ching Pi Nok" is considered to be most trustworthy. The author of the book, Yu Song-yong, was one of the Ministers at that time and actually witnessed the progress of the disastrous war.

SIZE AND SHAPE OF BIRDS' EGGS.

Where Largest and Smallest Are Found—Egg That Spins Like a Top.

As far as size is concerned the egg of the extinct *Aepyornis* of Madagascar was facile princeps, for it held two gallons and measured three feet in circumference. The smallest egg is that of the hummingbird, though the English gold crested wren lays an egg which is only half an inch in length.

The shape of eggs varies almost as much as the color, but it will always be noticed that nature has arranged it so that the axis of an egg is just where it will prevent the egg from rolling off a flat ledge or being broken by the parent bird fluttering off the nest when frightened. A notable example, says the *London Globe*, is the egg of the guillemot. The single egg laid by this bird has no nest at all to protect it but rests on the bare rock, fully exposed to wind and storm. However, the only effect that the elements have upon it is to make it spin round on its axis like a top.

To see the eggs of these birds often on the very brink of a sheer drop into the ocean many feet below makes one wonder that the species is not speedily exterminated, which would assuredly happen were not the guillemot's eggs round, like those of the kingfisher. Plovers eggs are somewhat similar in shape, for here again the nest is no nest at all, but merely a very slight depression in the ground. These eggs are very large, compared with the size of the bird, and their shape and number are such as to economize space and enable the bird to cover them.

Plovers' eggs will always be found with their points to the center, and are invariably four in number, and if disarranged the mother bird usually rearranges them. They are among the most difficult to find, for their color harmonizes wonderfully with their surroundings.

It is interesting to notice that those birds such as the barn owl, the kingfisher, the woodpecker, the martin, the long tailed tit and others whose eggs are more or less hidden from the light of day always or nearly always lay white eggs, but it must also be observed that the duck family lay whitish eggs and the chicken—who, by the bye, bears out the theory, for the hen bird utilizes a rabbit burrow for her nest invariably—lays a creamy white egg.

But the eggs of the pigeon, the turtle dove, the nighthawk and the guillemot completely upset all calculations, for they are all white, and few nests can be more open to the light than they of the turtle dove. And the cuckoo's egg there has always hung a halo of romance, and many fierce controversies have raged about the color of the egg, some declaring it to be of one fixed and unalterable color and others equally convinced that it varies greatly in hue. It so happens that neither faction is absolutely right or wrong.

On the authority of Mr. Kearton we learn that whether the cuckoo chooses to lay her egg in the nest of wagtail, meadow pipit or hedge sparrow, it is "of a reddish gray with a darker belt formed of numerous confluent spots at the thick end of the egg, but they are very variable." Thus we see that the ground color is always the same, but not so the spots. The markings on sparrows' eggs vary tremendously and the writer found a blackbird's nest with eggs exactly like those of a meadow



Photo by Paul Thompson, N. Y.

MIDSHIPMEN WITH THEIR LUGGAGE ABOUT TO EMBARK FOR THE PRACTICE CRUISE.

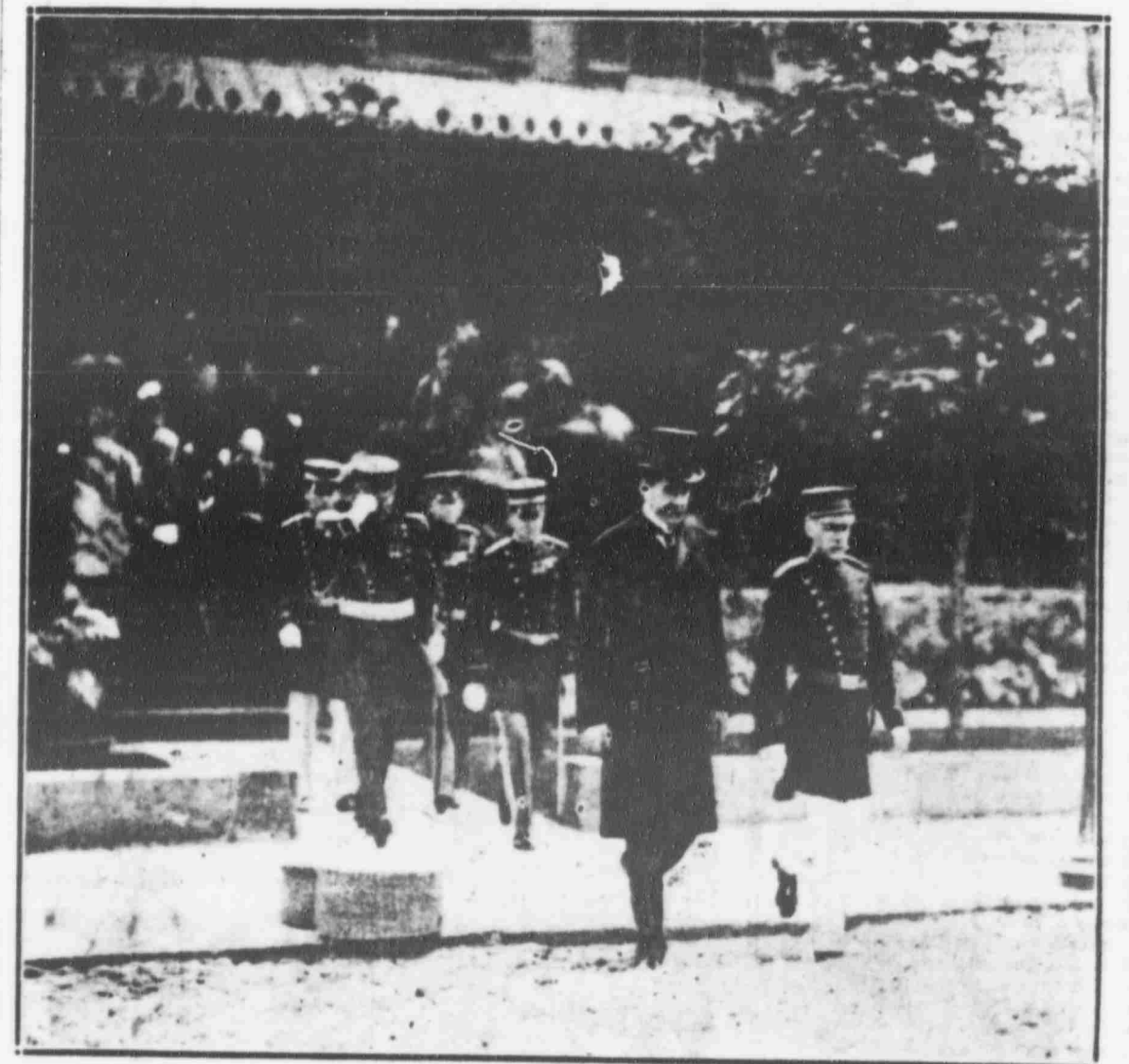


Photo by Paul Thompson, N. Y.

SECRETARY OF WAR DICKINSON AND BRIG-GEN. HOWE, COMMANDER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE EAST

thrush and another nest in which was a thrush's egg with only a single black spot.

A point of interest to the naturalist is the reason why eggs vary so greatly in number. According to those who have made a study of the matter the number of eggs laid varies according to the danger or safety of their position. Thus the eagle lays only two eggs, for the safety of the nest is practically assured, while the pheasant, who is surrounded by dangers of every description, lays as many as twelve and sometimes more.

But again this rule can hardly be called infallible, for the eggs of the great tit, from six to twelve in number, are laid in a safe hole in wall or tree, the bird in the latter case occasionally making the hole herself, while the night jar, who nests

upon the ground and for that reason is in constant danger, lays only two eggs. It seems more likely that the number of eggs depends on the nature of the surroundings, the plumage of the bird and color of the eggs, and perhaps most of all on the store of food for the young birds which the locality provides.

The nests and nesting places chosen by some birds are often very peculiar. Two holes made by a cannon ball in the muzzel-mast of the Victory, against which Nelson was standing when he received his death wound. Ducks have built their nests in trees and on one occasion a pair selected the tower of a church as a family residence, and it is common enough for sparrows to steal the martin's nest and keep out the rightful owners.

The writer will vouch for this fact, for he saw the nest and subsequently the two hen birds sitting side by side in it. One laid three eggs and the other five. The bird with three eggs hatched earlier by a day and they both brought up their broods with perfect success and amity.

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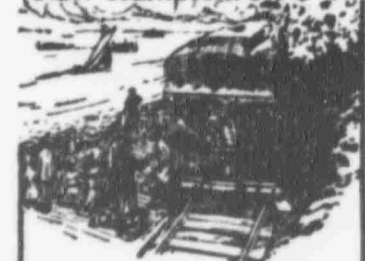
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